REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claim 1 - 11 are in the application for consideration. Entry of the present in the application and reconsideration of the application are requested in view of the amendments made in the claims and the statements appearing below herein.

1. Claims 1 - 11 have been objected to as containing informalities. Claim 1 has been amended to even more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention. As suggested by the examiner, claim 1 now recites, in pertinent part, "each said bias mechanism being operative independently of said other bias mechanism".

It is believed that the objection has been overcome by the amendment made in claim 1.

2. Claims 1 - 3 and 6 - 8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,682,239 B2 ("Mori et al.").

The roller assembly recited in these claims, as amended, is not specifically described or taught, by the reference. Claim 1, as amended, recites a roller assembly which includes a platen roller and a frame for mounting the platen roller. The frame has a main body and a plurality of fork structures for mounting each exposed end of the central axle of the platen roller.

The assembly also includes a plurality of bias mechanisms, each of which is operative independently of the other bias mechanism and each of which is cooperatively associated with only one of the fork structures and being adapted to push said respective axle end away from the frame and against the fork structure. Claim 1 has been amended to specifically recite this feature of applicant's roller assembly.

In applicant's advantageous roller assembly each end of the central axis of the roller is suspended independently of the other and therefore allows each exposed end of the central axle of the platen roller to move in a vertical direction, i.e., toward the main body of the roller assembly, independently of the other exposed end. Thus, the axis of rotation of the platen is free to move, albeit very small distances, as required by the particular application being practiced.

Applicant's roller assembly is intended to be used in a printer in which the print head is maintained in a fixed position. Since the print head is in a fixed position and does not move, the degree of freedom allowed by the roller assembly provides improved accuracy and repeatability in positioning of the print head.

The roller assembly of Mori et al. does not teach each and every element of applicant's presently claimed roller assembly. The roller assembly of the reference has the print head mounted in a frame and biased against the platen roller by a spring as is illustrated in Figs.

4, 5 and 6. As described at column 7, line 16 *et seq*, the print head 70 is mounted in frame 50. The assembly includes a head pressing leaf spring 80 and leaf spring parts 83 and 84 which operate together to press a radiator plate 71 (to which the thermal head is fixed) into contact with the platen roller.

In contrast to applicant's presently claimed roller assembly in which, as described in detail above, the axis of rotation of the platen roller is free to move, the axis of rotation of the platen roller in the Mori et al. assembly is fixed in a rigid position as a consequence of the print head being spring-loaded against the roller. In the final working position of the Mori et al. assembly, both ends of the central axle of the platen roller are maintained in a specific position due to the spring biasing action.

The assembly of Mori et al. does not have a plurality of independent bias mechanisms, each of which is cooperatively associated with only one end of the roller as is the case for the assembly of applicant. In the assembly of Mori et al. the bias mechanisms referred to by the examiner (leaf spring parts 83 and 84 - Fig. 4 of leaf spring 80 - Fig. 5) operate together to press radiator plate 71, to which the thermal print head is fixed, into contact with the platen roller. The leaf spring parts are shown extending from leaf spring body part 81 (see Fig. 4, for example). Each of these leaf spring parts, or the leaf spring parts in conjunction with the radiator plate, can not be said to operate

independently of each other since they are part of a single leaf spring mechanism 80.

Further, each of leaf spring parts 83 and 84 can not be said to be cooperatively associated with only one fork structure (55 or 56 - Fig. 8) since these spring parts are connected to the radiator plate 71 and press the radiator plate against the platen roller.

In support of the rejection the examiner has stated "...that the claim language does not require each bias mechanism to be associated with only one fork structure." This feature of applicant's roller assembly is now explicitly recited in the amended claims.

It is apparent from the foregoing that Mori et al. does not teach each and every element of the roller assembly recited in amended claim 1. Further, in view of the significant differences between the roller assembly of applicant and that of Mori et al., as pointed out in detail above, it is evident that the former is not taught or suggested by the reference within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. § 103. Claims 2, 3 and 6 - 8 are dependent upon claim 1 and are patentable for the same reasons stated above.

Reconsideration of this ground of rejection and withdrawal thereof are respectfully requested.

3. Claims 4, 5, 9, 10 and 11 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but have been indicated as including allowable subject matter. These claims are all indirectly dependent upon claim 1

and therefore are patentably distinguishable over the references of record for the same reasons stated above.

In summary, entrance of the present amendment in the application is believed to be in order and is respectfully requested since it is believed to place the claims in condition for allowance or at the very least to reduce the issues for appeal.

Claims 1 - 11 are in the application and have been shown to be proper in form for allowance and in substance to be directed to a wholly novel and patentable roller assembly. Reconsideration of the application and allowance of the claims are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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